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ABSTRACT

Universities must be prepared to provide quality child care not only to accommodate their changing student population, but also to help attract and retain competent and dedicated employees. Campus child care programs should be: (1) models to the community, to early education specialists, to parents, and to policymakers; (2) an integral part of the higher education institution; (3) responsible and fair employers; (4) intended to demonstrate professionalism; (5) developmentally appropriate; (6) financially responsible and accountable; and (7) financially supported by the sponsoring institution. (MDM)

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Position Paper on College-Sponsored Child Care Programs

The future starts here . . .

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National Coalition for Campus Child Care Position Paper on College-Sponsored Child Care Programs

The National Coalition for Campus Child Care is an educational and professional organization whose purpose is to promote quality in all types of campus child care programs and to advocate for the needs of children and families in the field of education and public policy.

In this era of budget-cutting, cost is often the main priority of administrators, but, we think it imperative that institutions whose goals stress education provide the **highest quality** child care available in their own communities. We believe that campus child care should be an integral part of the higher education system and should be designed to meet the academic, research, and service needs of both the institution and the community at large. Universities must be prepared to provide quality care not only to accommodate their changing student population, but also to help attract and retain competent and dedicated employees.

The position of the NCCCC on college-sponsored child care programs should be adhered to within the institution, as well as in the community.

EITHER SPONSORED OR CONTRACTED, CAMPUS CHILD CARE PROGRAMS SHOULD:

1. **Be models to the community, to early education specialists, to parents, to policy makers; they should:**

- be licensed or certified
- be accredited by NAEYC, thereby exceeding minimum state standards
- be innovative, setting standards for the field through leadership
- be attentive to the broad picture of early childhood education as it relates to other disciplines, such as public health, parent education, child nutrition, teacher training, etc.

2. **Be an integral part of the higher education institution by:**

- meeting the college's mission; reflecting the goals and culture of the institution
- being an agent to assist in recruitment and retention of students, staff, and faculty by meeting the campus' child care needs
- demonstrating a commitment to addressing issues of work and family
- working with an internal board or advisory committee to act as a liaison between the university and the private or contracted center.
- providing opportunities for contact with other academic disciplines
- being accountable to both service and educational concerns and needs; providing opportunities for parent involvement and decision making
- being responsive to social issues (child care, children's health, family needs, etc.)

3. **Be responsible and fair employers by:**

- hiring professional staff (knowledgeable teachers, experienced assistants and committed administrators)
- paying decent, equitable salaries (comparable to other work, worth, and salary levels of job position within the college)
- offering the same benefits as other service and/or education positions within the college
- paying attention to issues of good staff morale, thereby preventing high staff turnover

4. **Demonstrate professionalism by:**

- providing consultation and referrals to appropriate social or educational resources
- providing observation and training for community and college personnel or students
- adhering to tested theoretical and practical applications of early childhood education

5. **Provide developmentally appropriate programming by:**

- involving parents in the planning for their children
- evaluating children's developmental progress
- employing multi-cultural and anti-bias programing

6. **Be financially responsible and accountable by:**

- demonstrating an ability to fiscally manage a child care program by developing a financial plan which contains both long and short range goals
- be linked to an office of the college for financial controls as well as program cost benefits; for example: insurance, central purchasing, audits, grants, fund-raising, safety inspections

7. **Be financially supported by the institution; this support could include:**

- free space and utilities
- subsidies to support sliding fees or financial child care assistance to lower income families
- access to all resources within the institution (personnel, legal and health services, etc.)
- having all or some administrative costs paid by the institution
- access to additional resources, such as workstudy and intern students, research grants, etc.
- avoiding low salaries for child care personnel as a means of keeping down tuition rates (a custom common in commercial and for-profit programs)